



The Goose That Paris Eats at Christmas

By STERLING HEILIG.

EAT goose.

Eat goose at Christmas, to impress it on your mind.

Eat Goose at New Year's, to begin the year right.

Eat turkey for sentiment. Eat goose for your life!

Here are curious facts, on the point of being given out, more or less officially, by science. All passed as if the Holiday Goose habit of old Europe were rooted in profound mysteries.

Because when sections of America created Apple Day, they knew well why they did it—to encourage the culture of a wholesome fruit that grows beside us, to refresh the people. But when old Europe, back in the mists of time, created Goose Week, nobody knew why they did it—they just ate goose in a strange religious way at Christmas time!

Of course they warmed up on its grease.

And, now, some say that goose is greasy! Here and there in European cities where they imitate America, there is a refined tendency to side step goose grease; but the sturdy masses, who seldom call a doctor, that live under handicaps that would drag down Americans, stick to the winter goose as to a panacea!

It is the legacy of old experience.

So, if you're not above learning something new from wisdom so old that it is all but forgotten, make a brilliant Christmas gift to the finest girl on earth by buying her a goose. Or take her to a restaurant and feed her on roast goose. Purchase a bottle of pure goose grease and pour some of it in her soup, before she goes skating. Anoint her nose with the same best bet. With her tea, give her a slice of foie-gras. So shall she grow in beauty, strength and grace, and never sniffle!

Look you, sixty Paris children of the working classes lived most of their waking hours in what is called a *creche*—a species of kindergarten where little ones are cared for in a bunch, while mamma earns a salary elsewhere. Here the kids get one good meal per day from the municipality.

Well, when winter came, last year, half of the *creche* was fed on goose *confit*, which was not dear, two times per week—and half were not. The latter suffered usual coughs, colds, running noses, quinsies, and bronchitis. But the thirty children who ate goose *confit* were fresh, blithe, sturdy and intact—just like their little hankies, for they did not have to blow their little noses!

There is a young married thing so sylphlike that she can dance till 3 A. M. on lettuce sandwiches and a glass of cham-

pagne. She caught cold in the head. And another. And another. Can you figure Melusine blowing? "I shall die," she said, "if this continues!" It continued.

So, a wise old friend (I shall not name him!) put her on goose. "It will make me fat!" she whimpered. She increased six pounds on three goose meals per week. . . . then stopped increasing. She had not caught one first cold, up to the present writing.

Mysterious Benefits of Goose.

What is this occult bird which Europe

they say, with divers vegetable and animal elements whose whys and wherefores are still guesswork, goose "unlocks" secretions of profound sluggish glands, in winter time, as with a key—that is, the quantity required is strangely small compared with the results obtained. It cannot be put down to mere nutrition!

Half peasant France eats goose, all winter—and they don't know why, any more than Paris. They might say, "because we have the geese." But why have they the geese?

In particular, the country people from

mainder of the carcass as *confit*—the only other exception being to pot separately, at times, the "second joints," which form an essential part of the famous Gascon *garbure*.

The *confit* is made by cutting the meat from the carcass, half cooking it, and then piling it into an earthenware pot, along with melted goose grease, which fills up all empty spaces and seals the top with a thick white layer. All through autumn, winter and early spring the peasants turn to the *confit* pot when other meat is lacking. In the kitchen goose grease replaces butter.

These people are exempt from colds.

I never knew a countryman of the Pyrenees or around Grenoble way to have bronchitis, congestion, pneumonia or even a cold in the head.

It is a goose land down there, more so even than Alsace, whose Strasbourg *paté de foie-gras* in pastry is famous. Every Paris restaurant features it to-day in part from patriotic reasons, but very much because it is of superior perfume and suavity.

But down there in the city of Toulouse the south of France ships more goose livers and live birds to the foie-gras establishments than all Alsace produces. Phenomenally heavy goose livers are exhibited in shop windows. Around them rise piles of the oval earthen pots of the perfected product. French foie-grass is sold all over the world. All over the world there are people who know what's what.

Say what you please about foie-gras. Say that it is full of ptomaine poison—which it isn't. Call it "rich" and indigestible—which, again, is not so. Who cares anyhow? When Rossini, the composer; Dumas, the novelist, and De Musset, the poet, went down into the kitchen of the Maison Dorée and did better work than any chef in those brave days when men were men, they messed up foie-gras slices in port wine sauce—and ate it hot!

And even to-day, when you see those hard, solid well-to-do men of all Europe, rugged at sixty-five and solid at seventy, who make an art of eating not too much but well, who seem to never wear out, you will find on inquiry that they are foie-gras addicts.

Birds of Great Weight.

It is a wonderful bird.

The Toulouse goose.

Where the ordinary domestic goose averages from seven to eight pounds the Toulouse and Strasbourg varieties vary between thirteen and twenty-three pounds, normal, and from twenty-six to thirty-two pounds after scientific fattening for their livers' sake.

Only those who have motored across France from north to south and east to west can form any idea of its vast goose

The Mahogany Tree

By WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY

Christmas is here:
Winds whistle shrill,
Icy and chill,
Little care we:
Little we fear
Weather without,
Sheltered about
The Mahogany Tree.

Once on the boughs
Birds of rare plume
Sang, in its bloom;
Night-birds are we:
Here we carouse,
Singing like them,
Perched round the stem
Of the jolly old tree.

Here let us sport,
Boys, as we sit;
Laughter and wit
Flashing so free,
Life is but short—
When we are gone,
Let them sing on
Round the old tree.

Evenings we knew,
Happy as this;
Faces we miss,
Pleasant to see.
Kind hearts and true,
Gentle and just,
Peace to your dust!
We sing round the tree.

Care, like a dun,
Lurks at the gate;
Let the dog wait;
Happy we'll be!
Drink, every one;
Pile up the coals,
Fill the red bowls
Round the old tree!

Drain we the cup—
Friend, art afraid?
Spirits are laid
In the Red Sea.
Mantle it up;
Empty it yet;
Let us forget,
Round the old tree.

Sorrows, begone!
Life and its ills,
Duns and their bills,
Bid we to flee.
Come with the dawn,
Blue-devil sprite,
Leave us to-night
Round the old tree.

eats, as by a pagan ceremony, which has lost its meaning in the ages?

Truly, goose is fat. Goose warms up. As when Eskimos eat candles, so goose is fuel for your human furnace. Goose fat is peculiar fuel. In some unknown way, it digests without heaviness. There is no clogging ash—read uric acid and the rheumatic-sclerotic train. Goose builds winter tissues in a richer manner. Goose in summer nowise profits. But in analogy,

Strasbourg to Grenoble; all of Auvergne and the Bourbon district, all the Pyrenees, and, in between, Savoy and Dauphiny; and, only less so, the Atlantic coast, eat goose *confit*—canned goose—as staple winter food!

The peasants kill great quantities of geese in autumn. They sell the down for quiltings and pillows; sell the livers for foie-gras; sell the breasts for smoking, and, then, they pot down the re-



When the Frenchman has made his fortune he orders roast goose for his Christmas dinner. The whole family believes it brings good luck.